



City of Arts & Innovation

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RIVERSIDE POLICE DEPARTMENT CONDUCTS “MINOR DECOY” OPERATION

Riverside, CA – On February 26, 2019, the Riverside Police Department's Vice Unit conducted a minor decoy operation in the City of Riverside. Each minor, under the supervision of police detectives, would enter an establishment and attempt to purchase alcohol from an employee. The minors were directed to show their California driver's license, California identification card, or tell the employee their age if asked.

This operation was conducted over a five-hour period targeting twelve businesses within the city. Only one business ended up selling alcohol to a minor. The Riverside Police Department is gratified to see that the importance of obeying the law appears to be acknowledged by the majority of our business community.

Each sale to a minor is a criminal offense and the business is subject to administrative penalties by the Department of Alcohol Beverage Control, which can include having their license to sell alcoholic beverages suspended or revoked. The employee that sells alcohol to a minor is also arrested and given a citation. The penalty for a violation could be a minimum fine of \$250.00 and/or community service up to 32 hours for a first offense.



When the Minor Decoy program first began in the 1980's, the violation rate of retail establishments selling to minors was as high as 40 to 50 percent. When conducted on a routine basis, the rate has dropped in some cities as low as 10 percent or even below.

This program is funded by a grant from the California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) through the department's Grant Assistance Program.